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**Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit**

# Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report provides a summary of progress in the implementation of the section of General Assembly resolution 64/289 entitled "Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women", by which the Assembly established, as a composite entity, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, known as UN-Women. The report covers progress with regard to general principles; governance of the Entity; administration and human resources; financing; and transitional arrangements.

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# I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, the General Assembly established, as a composite entity, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, known as UN-Women. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a progress report to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh sessions on the implementation of the section of the resolution entitled "Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women". The present report, which is submitted in accordance with that request, covers general principles; governance of the Entity; administration and human resources; financing; and transitional arrangements.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to review the work of UN-Women at its sixty-eighth session, and requested the Secretary-General to present to the Assembly at that session a comprehensive report in that regard.

3. A first progress report was submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session (A/66/120). The present report provides an update on progress made, with a focus on institutional aspects and challenges two years after the establishment of the Entity and some 18 months after its full operationalization on 1 January 2011.

# II. Overall progress

## A. General principles

4. Since 1 July 2011, the date on which the previous progress report was finalized, UN-Women has further consolidated the mandates and functions transferred to it from the four former entities engaged in the field of gender equality and the empowerment of women (Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat; the United Nations Development Fund for Women; and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women). The Entity now operates as a unified whole, where close linkages exist between the normative support provided to intergovernmental bodies, the delivery of operational activities on the ground and the effective exercise of its coordination function. The Entity has taken the lead in United Nations work on gender equality and women's empowerment, giving rise to more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system.

5. The Entity is working to attain the key goal of gender equality and women's empowerment, in partnership with Member States, the entities of the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholders. It also advocates the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment as a means towards accelerated implementation of the United Nations goals in the areas of development, peace and security and human rights. In this respect, the Entity has amply confirmed the relevance and added value of the mandate of UN-Women as a composite entity that integrates normative support and operational and coordination functions.

6. UN-Women has seized opportunities to align progress on gender equality at the global and intergovernmental levels with the provision of on-the-ground support for national development efforts. Through an integrated approach, the Entity is

increasingly delivering specific results in providing support to Member States, at their request, strengthening coherence between its normative support and operational work and leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. These activities are guided by a strategic plan, a strategic framework and budgets approved by relevant intergovernmental bodies.

7. Following the changes introduced by the Committee for Programme and Coordination to the strategic framework for the period 2012-2013 (A/66/16), the strategic framework was adopted, along with the programme budget for the same biennium, by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/246, putting the planning and budgeting frameworks of UN-Women on a solid foundation. The strategic plan of UN-Women for 2011-2013 (UNW/2011/9) was endorsed by its Executive Board in its decision 2011/3. Subsequently, the Board approved, in its decision 2011/5, the institutional budget of UN-Women for 2012-2013 (UNW/2011/11), authorizing funding to support a continued change management process, including a regional architecture review and an organizational efficiency and effectiveness initiative aimed at further strengthening the capacity of the Entity, especially in its work at the country and regional levels. UN-Women is currently engaged in the preparatory phase for the forthcoming biennial budget proposals.

8. The Entity's progress in delivering on its mandates and priorities has been highlighted in reports of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2012/2) and the Executive Board of UN-Women (UNW/2012/1), as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/289. These and other reports to intergovernmental bodies presented a holistic picture of the work of the Entity and of the impact and results achieved through the integration of all its mandates and functions.

9. Significant results have been achieved in six key areas of focus of UN-Women: increasing women's leadership and participation in all areas that affect their lives; increasing women's access to economic empowerment and opportunities, especially for the most excluded; preventing violence against women and girls and expanding access to survivor services; increasing women's leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response; strengthening the responsiveness of plans and budgets to gender equality at all levels; and supporting the development of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment. Significant results have also been achieved with regard to management and organizational effectiveness.

10. During the reporting period, UN-Women made full use of national and global partnerships to promote space for women's participation in electoral processes. For example, in Egypt, its advocacy efforts and voter outreach contributed to the number of women voting in the 2011 parliamentary elections increasing from 40 per cent to some 46 per cent. Economic empowerment was the main programmatic growth area for UN-Women in 2011, with the focus shifting from economic security and smaller projects to interventions targeting structural issues, including women's access to productive assets, markets, services and decent work. For example, in Ethiopia, a joint programme on gender equality led by UN-Women provided support to the Federal Micro and Small Enterprise Agency, including the training of almost 4,000 women in marketing and business management skills and more than 5,000 women in initiating business engagements or expanding their businesses. In an

effort to put an end to violence against women, UN-Women supported policy and legal reforms, new national action plans and improved service-delivery standards in 37 countries. It took advantage of its new role as system-wide lead on gender equality to promote the involvement of women in peace and security, such as by supporting consultations that afforded women in 15 countries the opportunity to speak directly to senior United Nations officials. Lastly, UN-Women supported the incorporation of gender-sensitive, sector-specific targets and performance indicators into plans and budgets to facilitate the measuring of progress and to ensure accountability in implementation, linking them to the implementation of normative frameworks. For example, following the provision by UN-Women of technical assistance, Ethiopia published a national plan including gender indicators and targets, while Albania, Pakistan and the United Republic of Tanzania included gender-sensitive indicators in the performance monitoring frameworks of Government institutions.

11. The need to draw on the synergy between normative and operational efforts for gender equality and women's empowerment underpins the mandate of UN-Women. In 2011, the Entity laid the foundations of its approach with a four-pronged strategy. First, it used intergovernmental forums focusing specifically on gender equality to reaffirm and strengthen existing norms and standards, highlight gaps in implementation and formulate policy recommendations in, for example, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council. Second, it promoted gender perspectives in major United Nations and other agenda-setting processes, such as the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Third, it consistently pushed for gender equality and women's empowerment to be considered both cross-cutting and stand-alone issues central to development, human rights and peace and security. Fourth, it increasingly drew on evidence and experience acquired at the country level, through partnerships with Member States, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies and through UN-Women knowledge and advocacy functions, including capacity-development efforts with Governments and national actors.

12. A side event during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly at which women Heads of Government issued a joint statement on women's political participation exemplified the informal processes used by UN-Women to enhance intergovernmental outcomes. Discussions at that side event encouraged the adoption of Assembly resolution 66/130 on women and political participation. That resolution, together with other legislative mandates on the topic, provided a strong framework for the operational activities of UN-Women in the key focus area of women's leadership and participation. Similarly, UN-Women used the preparations for the Assembly's discussion of the situation of women in rural areas and for the priority theme of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges) to forge a new joint programme with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme (WFP) on accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women. This joint programme contributes to the implementation of Assembly resolution 66/129 on improvement of the situation of women in rural areas.

## B. Coordination role of the Entity

13. Over the past year, UN-Women made significant progress in driving more effective and efficient coordination within the United Nations system and in building strategic partnerships to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. It took full advantage of its leadership role with the aim of enhancing coherence and mobilizing joint action, increasing system-wide gender mainstreaming, developing and applying accountability frameworks and improving gender balance and the status of women in the United Nations system.

14. Results were achieved at several levels. The membership of UN-Women in coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its three pillars (the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group) resulted in increased attention being paid to the gender dimensions of key policy issues. Such attention was visible in the statement by the Chief Executives Board to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2011, in which it acknowledged the need to achieve gender equality and empower women in least developed countries.

15. A major achievement in terms of coordination and leadership was the development of a system-wide action plan on gender equality and women's empowerment, which was reviewed by the Chief Executives Board in April 2012, paving the way for its implementation. The action plan was developed in a collaborative and consultative process and included a pilot phase with a limited number of entities to ensure its applicability and usefulness. It constitutes a unified accountability framework for all United Nations system entities, applying a scorecard approach and establishing minimum requirements or standards for gender mainstreaming based on intergovernmental mandates. It covers results-based management; financial and human resources, including equal representation of women; capacity development; oversight; evaluation; monitoring and reporting; and knowledge generation and management. Its roll-out phase over the coming year will be critical in ensuring that it delivers specific results. UN-Women will support United Nations entities in their efforts to invest in its implementation, insofar as is feasible.

16. As the Chair of and secretariat for the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, UN-Women played a key role in promoting and advocating coordinated United Nations system positions and action on gender equality and stronger and more systematic gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes. United Nations entities successfully provided a joint statement on the empowerment of rural women to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-sixth session. The Network's task force on rural women produced a fact sheet on rural women and the Millennium Development Goals, which supported the Commission's deliberations with data, evidence and examples of good practice.[1]

17. UN-Women worked with other inter-agency mechanisms led or convened by entities of the United Nations system to strengthen their capacity to reflect gender perspectives within their mandates. Key examples are the Entity's contribution to

[1] Available from www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/ruralwomen/documents/En-Rural-Women-MDGs-web.pdf.

ensuring a strong focus on gender equality in the overall advocacy of the United Nations in the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 29 November to 1 December 2011, and the follow-up process for defining a global monitoring framework, in addition to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

18. In accordance with paragraph 56 of General Assembly resolution 64/289, UN-Women is working at the country level as part of the resident coordinator system and has assumed a leadership role in coordinating work on gender equality. It is currently chairing or co-chairing gender theme groups in 45 countries and has contributed to the development of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in some 20 countries. UN-Women has offices in all eight "Delivering as one" pilot countries and is working closely with the resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams.

19. Participation in joint programmes with partner agencies at the country level provides significant opportunities for UN-Women to push for gender equality. The Entity is currently active in 106 such programmes that cover key areas of focus, including ending violence against women, strengthening gender perspectives in national planning, women's economic empowerment, and conflict prevention and social cohesion.

20. UN-Women has also expanded and strengthened its partnerships with individual United Nations entities to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. In December 2011, the executive directors of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN-Women sent a joint letter to the field representatives of both entities, reaffirming each entity's commitment to gender equality programming within their mandates and areas of strength. In May 2012, UN-Women and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization signed a letter of cooperation to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

21. UN-Women became the latest member of H4+ in 2012, joining UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization, the World Bank and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. The group provides coordinated and harmonized support for the implementation of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health by collectively supporting countries with the highest rates of maternal, newborn and child mortality and working to accelerate progress in saving the lives and improving the health of women and newborns, and, in so doing, achieve the targets of the Millennium Development Goals. The role of UN-Women will be primarily one of advocacy, focused on tackling the root causes of maternal mortality.

22. UN-Women continued to lead and coordinate the Secretary-General's campaign "UNiTE to End Violence Against Women", including through efforts to implement strategies and activities at the global, regional and national levels, working closely with the members of the working group on the campaign established by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. A survey of the activities undertaken as part of the campaign, in particular at the national level, suggests that the United Nations system is adopting a shared and coherent approach in its work to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. Many United Nations resident coordinators now lead their country teams

in the development of joint programming and activities in furtherance of the goals of the campaign.

23. UN-Women also expanded inter-agency partnerships at the regional level. For example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, UN-Women is working with FAO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to develop case studies and policy recommendations to empower women in rural areas.

## C. Interaction with civil society and other stakeholders

24. Over the past year, UN-Women consolidated and expanded the practice of effective consultation and partnerships with non-governmental and civil society organizations in advancing shared objectives in promoting women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment.

25. Following extensive consultations with civil society networks and nominations from such organizations, the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women appointed a global civil society advisory group in April 2012. The group will serve as a forum for dialogue and sustained and structured engagement with civil society leaders to advance the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment. The 21 members include leaders of grass-roots, rural and community-based groups, indigenous people's organizations, academics, activists and male leaders working on gender equality and women's rights issues. Membership will be on a rotational basis, with members serving for two years.

26. Regional and national civil society advisory groups are currently being set up and will follow the same principles of purpose and composition. The advisory group for Latin America and the Caribbean was set up in May 2012 and the country group for Pakistan in July 2012.

27. The establishment of the Global Civil Society Advisory Group marked a high point in a year characterized by continued efforts by UN-Women to strengthen consultation with non-governmental and civil society organizations, as requested by the General Assembly in paragraph 55 of its resolution 64/289. UN-Women continued to support civil society participation in intergovernmental processes. Through increased outreach, the Entity enabled non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to better contribute to substantive discussions at the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. A total of 2,084 representatives of 435 non-governmental organizations participated in the session. They submitted 74 written statements, delivered 12 oral statements in the general discussion and made 27 interventions during interactive expert panels. UN-Women also worked to create opportunities for interaction between members of the Bureau of the Commission and representatives of civil society, both in the lead-up to, and during, the session, so as to enhance the sharing of views.

28. UN-Women also facilitated the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Executive Board. Representatives of 24 such organizations attended the past three sessions (December 2011, January 2012 and May/June 2012), with several making statements on agenda items pertaining to the UN-Women strategic plan and its implementation. They welcomed the increased consultations and partnerships with UN-Women that contributed to the

implementation of the strategic plan, in addition to cooperation at various levels to promote gender equality.

29. UN-Women also strengthened collaboration and coordination with the United Nations system on partnerships with civil society. The Entity now participates in civil society coordination and knowledge-sharing processes of United Nations entities, which will create additional opportunities for outreach to civil society on key issues on the global agenda, such as discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. UN-Women also joined the global Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, where it will work to highlight gender equality issues.

30. In an effort to accelerate progress towards the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment, UN-Women fostered partnerships with many other stakeholders, including academic institutions, the media and the business community. Private-sector partnerships were formed with a number of companies and groups, including Avon, Coca-Cola, Johnson & Johnson and Tag Heuer. UN-Women began to work with Microsoft to use information and communications technology for economic and political empowerment programmes for women, improved data, awareness-raising and advocacy.

## D. Knowledge hub function of the Entity

31. UN-Women expanded its capacity to serve as a global knowledge hub, through research, analysis and sharing of evidence and lessons learned with regard to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in areas such as women's political participation, women's economic empowerment, women's role in peace and security and ending violence against women. This function also encompasses the identification, development and dissemination of methodologies, tools and examples of good practice. Through this function, the Entity provides evidence-based analysis to support intergovernmental discussion and decision-making. It also provides technical and advisory services to Member States, at their request. Research and analysis increasingly also support the coordination function of UN-Women.

32. Research carried out by UN-Women is benefiting from experience acquired and lessons learned from the Entity's operational work. Examples of good practice in the promotion of gender equality, in addition to better understanding of implementation gaps and challenges, are being channelled back more consistently to intergovernmental bodies through reports, databases and other knowledge products. UN-Women communities of practice will increasingly be called upon to ensure that the operational work of the Entity and its partners in the United Nations system can substantively inform preparations for intergovernmental meetings, such as the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women and its priority and review themes.

33. One recent achievement towards strengthening the knowledge hub function of UN-Women was the securing of funding for the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality initiative, a major new partnership with the United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and partner Governments. Initially working with six pilot countries, this initiative aims to improve the quality and availability of data on key gender equality indicators in relation to education, assets, employment and

health. It directly benefits the pilot countries as it contributes to a better understanding of implementation gaps and enhances evidence-based policymaking.

34. During the period under review, progress was made in establishing the UN-Women training centre in Santo Domingo as the leading United Nations centre of excellence in gender equality training. Its long-term objectives include contributing to the development of the training component of the UN-Women capacity development strategy; strengthening coordination within the United Nations system and with key international partners to advance women's rights and gender equality; and contributing to building the technical capacity of the United Nations and its partners in priority areas.

35. In its first annual workplan, for 2012, the centre aims to establish its foundations and develop its first curriculum, focusing on the priority areas of the UN-Women strategic plan such as ending violence against women. Particular emphasis is being laid on system-wide coordination, including the implementation of the system-wide action plan and the creation of a basic training module on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The centre will serve Government officials, civil society and United Nations staff.

36. New intranet and extranet systems enable knowledge to be shared internally and with partners throughout the United Nations system. Several communities of practice have been established to share information and to foster, share and compile examples of good practice, including one for use by the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and another for use by UN-Women staff, both at headquarters and in the field, on work pertaining to the post-2015 development agenda. Additional communities of practice will follow, including on ending violence against women, which will build on and further extend the reach of the Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls and access to the Secretary-General's database on violence against women.

37. To support collaboration and the sharing of knowledge, UN-Women established a knowledge management platform (intranet and extranet) that is fully operational and already widely used at its headquarters. Further roll-out to field offices will begin in the second half of 2012. The platform supports activities in terms of gaining access to and working with the most suitable people, information and knowledge at the most suitable time; building the UN-Women knowledge base and partnerships through new channels of interaction, collaboration and influence; and enhancing communications and business performance. Its features include the collection and presentation of corporate content, spaces and networks around the Entity's areas of work; flexible collaborative spaces (internal or with external partners); and personalized knowledge resources through keyword alerts, colleague networking and profiles.

38. The functionality of the platform currently extends to content management (e.g. repositories, permissions, document versioning and availability when out of the office), improved search and retrieval (e.g. search engine and tagging), networking and communication (e.g. announcements and discussion forums) and business productivity (e.g. calendaring, contact, management, e-registry and automated workflows). The platform is based on templates so as to create a common experience and to facilitate roll-out throughout the Entity. It is user-friendly, configurable by focal points and integrated with Microsoft Office.

## E. External communications

39. During the past year, UN-Women enhanced its external communications to increase the scope and impact of its gender equality and women's empowerment advocacy efforts. The Entity expanded its regular media contacts to more than 1,600 media outlets worldwide. Its corporate online presence grew threefold in 2011 to more than 220,000 visits per month and its social media followership reached an audience of 300,000. Particular emphasis was laid on strengthening collaboration and coordination between UN-Women headquarters and field offices to extend the reach of those efforts at the national level.

40. Media outreach by UN-Women generated extensive coverage of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and International Women's Day 2012. The International Women's Day 2012 message by the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women was picked up or quoted in more than 800 media outlets. In addition, for the first time, the Entity integrated social media into its coverage of the Commission through its use of a Twitter account. Each day, the hashtag "#CSW56" created an average of 5 million impressions and reached more than 2 million unique followers. On Facebook, posts about the Commission were seen by more than 130,000 people.

41. Such global efforts are increasingly complemented by the strategic expansion of media partnerships at the regional and national levels. For example, in the Andean region, UN-Women worked with 40 print, television and radio partners to increase coverage of gender equality. The Entity sponsored television and radio spots on voter education in Egypt that aired widely on national channels.

42. UN-Women also works with partners to expand its advocacy reach in thematic focus areas. For example, through its social mobilization platform "Say NO — UNiTE to End Violence against Women", the Entity forged a partnership with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts to develop an informal curriculum on ending violence against women. Campaigns in the Caribbean and South Asia engaged artists and young people in efforts to end violence against women.

**UN-Women engagement with the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development process**

The engagement of UN-Women in the preparations for, and during, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, exemplifies the Entity's consolidated implementation, in the context of a major intergovernmental process, of all its functions in order to enhance gender equality outcomes.

Through its normative support function, UN-Women contributed to ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment were recognized as key priorities in "The future we want", the title given to the outcome document of the Conference, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288, and that gender equality considerations and references featured throughout. Consequently, emphasis is laid in the outcome document on women's vital role and leadership in achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental.

In the lead-up to the Conference, UN-Women used its knowledge-hub function to build a case for attaining the goal of gender equality and for advancing women's rights and leadership in sustainable development. It provided policy input, including a substantive contribution to the draft outcome document.

Through its coordination function, UN-Women successfully engaged with the Chief Executives Board so that gender equality and women's empowerment featured prominently in two joint statements addressed to the Conference, issued in October 2011 and April 2012. The Entity also worked through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to ensure coherence throughout the United Nations system in its advocacy for gender equality in the context of sustainable development. The resulting key messages, which benefited from contributing organizations' comparative advantage in specific sectors, were circulated to Member States and other stakeholders.

Advocacy activities and outreach were undertaken to mobilize stakeholders and highlight the importance of the promotion of gender equality in the context of sustainable development. UN-Women effectively interacted with civil society organizations, in particular the women's major group, throughout the negotiation process to advocate a strong and prominent reflection of gender equality issues in the outcome document. It facilitated the participation of grass-roots and other civil society organizations in the preparatory phase, in addition to raising resources to support the participation of some 30 civil society representatives in the Conference itself.

At the Conference, UN-Women brought together representatives of Governments, civil society, United Nations agencies and the private sector for two important side events, entitled "Leaders' forum" and "Women leaders' summit on the future women want", respectively. The former provided a space for dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment and sustainability, highlighting policies that could improve women's lives by reducing poverty, advancing their economic opportunities and protecting them from adverse health and environmental challenges. At the latter, six women Heads of State and Government signed a call to action in which they urged Governments, civil society and the private sector to accord priority to gender equality and women's empowerment in the sustainable development agenda.

Through extensive external communications, UN-Women disseminated and publicized key messages and championed the centrality of gender equality in sustainable development. The media, social media and other online communities were used to reinforce the Entity's key messages. Outreach to leading international media outlets resulted in several thousand replications in at least 84 countries on all continents. More than 1,500 tweets from 500 people created 36 million impressions and reached 5 million unique users. On 13 June, a live chat about women and sustainable development on Twitter using the hashtag "#AskUNWomen" reached 3.3 million unique users. A dedicated section of the UN-Women website collated close to 100 multimedia news and

feature items to provide timely and relevant information. The UN-Women website registered a 12 per cent increase in hits during the Conference.

UN-Women integrated its operational experiences into all aspects of its contribution to the Conference process and will actively participate in follow-up and implementation. Evidence and examples of good practice from the key focus areas of UN-Women, especially in relation to women's economic empowerment and leadership, enriched analysis of linkages between gender equality and sustainability. As part of the Conference outcome, UN-Women registered several existing and planned programmes as its voluntary commitments* to contribute to the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. These include the joint programme of UN-Women, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and WFP on accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women; the UN-Women, United Nations Environment Programme and Peacebuilding Support Office partnership on women's engagement in natural resources management; the UN-Women project to develop a knowledge gateway on women's economic empowerment; and programmes relating to disaster risk reduction and climate change in Bangladesh, China, Pakistan and the Pacific islands.

* The Conference secretariat created an online registry for voluntary commitments by all stakeholders — major groups, the United Nations system and Member States — to push forward the sustainable development agenda. In the outcome document, the Secretary-General is invited to compile the voluntary commitments in an Internet-based registry to make them fully transparent and accessible to the public. See www.uncsd2012.org/allcommitments.html.

# III. Governance of the Entity

43. During the period under review, the governance structure for UN-Women set up by the General Assembly in paragraph 57 of its resolution 64/289 continued to provide effective normative and operational policy guidance to the Entity. Member States participated extremely actively, and at a high level, in the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Executive Board of UN-Women. While the question of the working relationship between the Commission and the Executive Board continued to be a topic of informal exchanges among delegations, a formal decision of the Economic and Social Council, as mandated in paragraph 67 (b) of resolution 64/289, remains pending.

## A. Executive Board

44. Since the completion of the previous report, the Executive Board has taken key decisions that have further strengthened the Entity's capacity to expand demand-driven support to Member States at the national level. Its approval, in its decision 2011/5, of a gross appropriation of $140.8 million for the institutional budget for 2012-2013 provided the resources needed to implement the strategic plan for 2011-

2013. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session of 2012, held from 29 May to 1 June, in particular those on the implementation of the strategic plan for 2011-2013 (decision 2012/2) and on the UN-Women regional architecture (decision 2012/4), provided further guidance and strengthened the basis for the operational activities and organizational effectiveness of UN-Women.

45. The Executive Board participated for the second time in the joint meeting of the executive boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, held on 30 and 31 January 2012. Members of the Bureau of the Executive Board participated in a joint field visit of the members of those executive boards to Djibouti, from 18 to 22 March 2012, and to Ethiopia, from 22 to 31 March 2012. The purpose of the visits was to assess how the United Nations country teams were operating and coordinating in the countries and how the United Nations was supporting Government priorities in tackling humanitarian and development challenges. Djibouti, a least developed country, was selected because of its efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals in the face of continuing humanitarian and development challenges in the areas of food security, climate change, environment, energy and water. In the case of Ethiopia, attention was also paid to the interaction between United Nations agencies and the Government and other development partners.

## B. Commission on the Status of Women

46. UN-Women used the preparatory process for the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (27 February to 9 March 2012, with an additional meeting on 15 March to complete the work of the session) to further strengthen coherence and linkages between its normative support role and its operational activities on the ground. The experience, expertise and examples of good practice from its field offices were channelled into the analysis presented to the Commission, especially with regard to the priority and review themes of the session. The efforts also helped to expand the capacity of UN-Women to offer technical and thematic advice on the implementation of global norms and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment. UN-Women supported the Commission in all aspects of its session, including a general discussion, a high-level round-table discussion and six interactive panel discussions. The Commission adopted six resolutions and one decision.

47. UN-Women is increasing its preparatory work in an effort to create a conducive environment for a successful fifty-seventh session, including through greater involvement of its field offices and outreach to Member States, entities of the United Nations system and civil society organizations. At that session, the Commission will consider as its priority theme the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls and as its review theme the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. It will discuss the possibility of conducting a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2015, and decide on future priority themes.

### C. Working relationship between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Executive Board of the Entity

48. In its resolution 64/289, emphasizing the need to establish specific results-based reporting mechanisms, in addition to the need for coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of the work of UN-Women, the General Assembly requested the Commission on the Status of Women and the Executive Board of the Entity to work closely together to provide coherent guidance and direction in their respective areas. It also requested the Economic and Social Council to establish appropriate and concrete linkages between the Commission and the Executive Board in order to ensure consistency between the overall policy guidance set by the Commission and the operational strategies and operational activities approved by the Executive Board.

49. The process was initiated by the intergovernmental bodies concerned in January 2011, when the outgoing President of the Economic and Social Council convened an informal meeting of the Council Bureau with the bureaux of the Commission and of the Executive Board, with the participation of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women. Subsequently, exchanges of views took place within the bureaux of the Commission and of the Executive Board, between the two bureaux and between the Bureau of the Council and the presiding officers of the Commission and the Executive Board. At its substantive session, in July 2012, the Council is expected to take further steps towards implementing the request of the General Assembly.

## IV. Administration and human resources

50. UN-Women became fully operational on 1 January 2011, having completed the transitional arrangements outlined in paragraphs 81 to 88 of resolution 64/289. Its move to its new offices in New York (at 220 East 42nd Street) was completed in November 2011, although a small contingent of staff remains at another location until the expiration of the existing lease for those premises. The co-location of headquarters staff from the four constituent entities contributed to the emergence of a strong team spirit to vigorously work towards the mandate accorded to the Entity by the General Assembly.

51. The effective functioning of UN-Women is supported by uniform technology infrastructure for all personnel. Outdated equipment has been replaced and standardized throughout the Entity and desktop software updated. UN-Women is now realigning its central systems and websites. A platform has been established for videoconferences with field offices by drawing upon existing infrastructure elements.

52. Further progress has been made in strengthening the human resources of UN-Women since the completion of the previous progress report. All the members of the senior management team were appointed in June 2011 and had assumed their respective duties by September 2011. With the consolidation of four entities into UN-Women and the alignment exercise for headquarters staff positions, a two-phased competitive selection process was opened to internal and external candidates to fill unaligned, new, vacant and established core positions at headquarters (see A/66/120, paras. 44-46). Since then, strategic human resources management has

remained a priority and further progress has been made in strengthening the human resources of UN-Women and in addressing legacy issues pertaining to contract types and an overreliance on short-term contracts for full-time functions. The outcome of the internal competitive selection process was announced in August 2011, and 29 of the 39 positions were filled by internal candidates. In 2011, recruitment was finalized for 114 posts and initiated for 57 posts. Women comprise 80 per cent of the staff of UN-Women.

53. The consolidation process involving field positions was initiated in mid-2011. The field offices in 33 countries and areas were strengthened on the basis of a field capacity assessment conducted in early 2011 and in line with the UN-Women strategic plan. The reconfiguration of the regional structures of the Entity was initiated in late 2011 and will be carried out in 2012 and 2013, thereby completing the implementation of its structural design.

54. UN-Women commissioned an external study of options for its regional architecture, including lessons learned from other organizations both within and outside the United Nations system, leading to the identification of the key elements of a new regional architecture for UN-Women that will better support Member States and enable UN-Women to use the United Nations system to maximum advantage with a view to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, through consultations with Member States, civil society partners, United Nations agencies and UN-Women staff.

55. The new regional architecture shifts decision-making and policy, programmatic and operational support to regional centres and a select set of multi-country offices. This will enable UN-Women to achieve its vision and tackle structural challenges, including procedural inefficiencies, by simplifying and expediting oversight and decision-making in support of country offices. The architecture will also empower senior leaders in the field to make strategic decisions that are responsive to national and regional priorities and ensure effective cooperation with the United Nations system. A change management implementation plan for the new regional architecture is being developed to guide UN-Women through these decisions and their implementation.

56. UN-Women continued to invest in strengthening the cohesiveness of its workforce and in expanding learning opportunities for its staff in order to deal with variations in capacity throughout the system. A retreat for leaders and managers in early 2012 brought together staff from both headquarters and the field to strengthen the leadership of UN-Women as a team, including links between headquarters and the field and between normative, operational and coordination functions, and to identify specific steps to deliver organizational improvements. Learning, training and staff development initiatives were launched to support areas such as learning needs analysis, operational management, work planning and evaluation, and implementation of wellness and work-life balance policies.

57. Since June 2011, steps have been taken towards securing adequate staff representation for UN-Women through a transparent and participatory process. Town hall meetings and brown-bag sessions with staff representatives of the United Nations Staff Union and the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Council enabled all interested staff to be informed about and discuss available options. These meetings were complemented by online resources. The process is expected to be completed

by the end of 2012 with a final decision that will consider the best option for staff representation, both at headquarters and in the field.

# V. Financing

## A. Regular budget resources

58. In its resolution 66/246, the General Assembly approved the proposed programme budget of UN-Women for the biennium 2012-2013 (A/66/6 (Sect. 17)), which had been prepared in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8). In particular, the Assembly approved an increase of two posts for programme support: one Administrative Officer and one Budget and Finance Officer.

59. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 65/259, the proposed programme budget for 2014-2015 will elaborate on the normative intergovernmental processes undertaken by UN-Women to implement its mandate, as referred to in paragraph 75 of resolution 64/289. This elaboration will be based on the experience acquired by UN-Women since becoming fully operational in January 2011 in finding the most effective ways to deliver its mandates and functions and to meet evolving needs.

60. Pursuant to the approval by the General Assembly of the use of a grant arrangement pertaining to the regular budget portion of UN-Women, the Entity continued to use that modality smoothly and effectively. Following issuance of an allotment advice of $6,957,100 by the Programme Planning and Budget Division of the Secretariat for 2011, UN-Women consistently received the approved resources from the Treasury, enabling it to properly pay for authorized expenses. By the end of 2011, UN-Women reported expenditure incurred and reported in the amount of $6,113,565, resulting in overpayment of $843,535. That amount has since been recovered from remittances in respect of the 2012 budget.

## B. Voluntary resources

61. In its decision 2011/5, the Executive Board approved the Entity's institutional budget for the biennium 2012-2013 in the amount of $140.8 million. Those resources underpin the implementation of the strategic plan, which was endorsed by the Executive Board in its decision 2011/3. The resources will enable the Entity to achieve results by providing high-quality technical expertise, making full use of resources, developing partnerships, brokering knowledge, engaging in advocacy and influence, and building capacity, thereby contributing to changing the lives of women and girls on the ground. Specifically, they strengthen the capacity of UN-Women to support countries in their pursuit of nationally owned priorities in gender equality and the empowerment of women. The resources will also support the phased development of 21 new country presences during the period 2012-2013, in addition to the strengthening of capacity in the 17 country presences for which the Executive Board approved institutional budget resources in 2011. Limited strengthening of headquarters capacity will contribute primarily to overcoming gaps

in core institutional functions and support the programmatic priorities of the strategic plan.

62. The financial regulations and rules for UN-Women (UNW/2011/5/Rev.1) became effective as from 8 April 2011, following their adoption by the Executive Board of UN-Women in its decision 2011/2. In its decision 2012/3, the Executive Board approved proposed amendments to the financial regulations and took note of the amended financial rules based on the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and harmonized cost classifications under the integrated budget.

63. Improved returns from resource mobilization were realized in 2011. The new resource mobilization strategy, which includes outreach to the private sector and articulation of a business case for contributing to the Entity, drove higher support for core resources, with more donors increasing their core support to $10 million or higher, and an increase in non-traditional donor support. In addition, the number of Government donors increased from 107 to 116 during the year.

64. Core resources increased from $78 million in 2010 to $125 million in 2011 (60 per cent), reflecting donor commitment to the work and mandate of UN-Women, the global financial constraints notwithstanding. As to non-core funds, a total of $103 million was received in 2011, an increase of $6 million (6 per cent) compared to 2010. This includes contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women and the Fund for Gender Equality. The combined core and non-core funds remained below earlier targets, however. In particular, targets for 2012 and 2013 were reduced from the $500 million per annum in the Secretary-General's comprehensive proposal (A/64/588, para. 47) and the $900 million for 2012-2013 projected in the previous progress report (A/66/120, para. 58) to a total of $700 million for the biennium.

65. Relatively new donors such as Gabon, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates were among those pledging and providing substantial contributions, some of them of $1 million or more (India and the United Arab Emirates). Several other donors increased their core support to UN-Women: Spain contributed more than $25 million; Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland some $15 million; and Australia and Canada close to $10 million. Several Member States significantly increased their core contributions, such as Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and Switzerland. About one third of the 116 Member States that contributed to core resources made multi-year pledges.

66. UN-Women strengthened the mobilization of resources from foundations, receiving grants of $1,233,000 in 2011. The Entity also supported the capacity development of its 18 national committees, which increased their activities. For example, the Australian committee organized 350 events around International Women's Day, with proceeds benefiting UN-Women projects in the Pacific. The United States committee held walks to end violence against women, with proceeds donated to the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. The Icelandic committee expanded its sisterhood campaign, a monthly donation initiative that also raises awareness of gender equality and UN-Women, while the Finnish committee launched a similar programme. Overall, national committees contributed $823,000 in 2011, while also advocating increased Government contributions.

67. Several national committees, including those in Australia, Iceland, Japan, Singapore and the United Kingdom, also developed partnerships with private-sector companies, while those in Australia, Japan and Switzerland promoted the Women's Empowerment Principles, resulting in several companies becoming signatories thereto.

68. An online registry, established in response to General Assembly resolution 64/289 to ensure that reporting on funding is transparent and that information is easily accessible to Member States, continues to provide information on contributions pledged and received.[2]

## VI. Summary and conclusions

69. The information provided herein has demonstrated that General Assembly resolution 64/289 continues to provide a strong and solid basis for the Entity to discharge its mandated functions. UN-Women has proceeded smoothly in further consolidating its leadership, and coordination and coherence throughout the United Nations system have become more effective. Its institutional capacity and organizational efficiency and effectiveness as a composite entity are increasingly being enhanced. At the same time, areas where further work is necessary have also emerged more clearly.

70. Of highest concern is the fact that the resource mobilization targets for 2011 were not fully met. Achieving the reduced goal of $700 million for the biennium requires significantly increased donor support. If UN-Women is to fully discharge its mandate in the years to come, donor support to achieve a minimum funding level that is commensurate with the ambitions of the mandate accorded to it by the General Assembly will be essential.

71. UN-Women is increasingly linking its normative support function with its operational experience and expertise. Priority will be accorded to efforts to establish a robust system for ensuring that UN-Women work on gender equality at the country level better and more systematically responds to the outcomes of global intergovernmental processes.

72. UN-Women will make greater efforts to more clearly present its role vis-à-vis the United Nations system in coordination and inter-agency settings. While progress in strengthening system-wide cooperation has been noticeable, greater investment and capacity are needed to ensure that the Entity can fully take on its leadership role in those settings and provide the specific technical support required by United Nations partners in all sectors, both at headquarters and in the field. Particular efforts are needed to build the capacity and increase the experience of UN-Women field presences to engage effectively in inter-agency mechanisms and cooperation.

73. Although UN-Women has strengthened its human resources, variations in capacity throughout the Entity remain a significant challenge. Overly centralized decision-making continues to cause delays and transaction costs, along with insufficient communication. These are priorities for the 2012 regional architecture process and for organizational effectiveness efforts more broadly.

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[2] See www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Pledges_May_31_2012.pdf.

74. As mandated by the General Assembly, a comprehensive report on the implementation of the relevant part of resolution 64/289 will be submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.